

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. An exposure deciding method for deciding laser exposure when image formation is performed by an electrophotographic process, comprising:

5 an expansion step of expanding image data at a resolution higher than actual resolution of an output apparatus;

 a resolution conversion step of subjecting high-resolution data, which is the result of expansion at
10 said expansion step, to a resolution conversion to the actual resolution of the output apparatus;

 an exposure decision step of deciding laser exposure when image formation is performed in such a manner that density of prescribed image data will be
15 the same before and after image formation; and

 an image formation step of forming an image represented by image data, which has undergone the resolution conversion performed at said resolution conversion step, based upon the laser exposure that
20 has been decided at said exposure decision step.

2. The method according to claim 1, wherein said resolution conversion step includes averaging the high-resolution data using a matrix of a predetermined size and subjecting the actual resolution of the
25 output apparatus to a resolution conversion.

3. The method according to claim 1, wherein said resolution conversion step includes averaging the

high-resolution data using a matrix in which boxes of a matrix of a predetermined size have been shifted by one-half pixel.

4. The method according to claim 1, wherein said
5 exposure decision step includes forming a prescribed pattern that will take on a different image formation state despite the fact that image pattern is the same originally, measuring the density of the prescribed pattern formed, and deciding the laser exposure in
10 such a manner that the density of the prescribed pattern will be the same before and after image formation.

5. The method according to claim 1, wherein said exposure decision step includes forming a prescribed
15 pattern that is repeated at fixed intervals, measuring the density of the prescribed pattern formed and deciding the laser exposure based upon the result of measurement in such a manner that a difference in average density will not develop between the
20 prescribed patterns.

6. An image forming apparatus for deciding laser exposure when image formation is performed by an electrophotographic process, comprising:

expansion means for expanding image data at a
25 resolution higher than actual resolution of an output apparatus;

resolution conversion means for subjecting high-

resolution data, which is the result of expansion by said expansion means, to a resolution conversion to the actual resolution of the output apparatus;

exposure decision means for deciding laser

- 5 exposure when image formation is performed in such a manner that density of prescribed image data will be the same before and after image formation; and

- image formation means forming an image represented by image data, which has undergone the
10 resolution conversion performed by said resolution conversion means, based upon the laser exposure that has been decided by said exposure decision means.

7. A program for causing a computer to execute the exposure deciding method set forth in claim 1.

- 15 8. A computer-readable recording medium storing the program set forth in claim 7.